

## Nathan Cleverly's Father/Trainer Promises KO Win Over Kovalev

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 07 August 2013 14:55

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Vince Cleverly, the trainer/father of WBO light heavy champ Nathan Cleverly, went out on a limb in a Wednesday conference call to hype the Aug. 17 scrap between son Nathan and Sergey Kovalev, the Russian-born bomber who has built a rep as a finisher in the last year.

In fact, Vince went out on two limbs, I'd say, when he 1) promised that Nathan would KO Kovalev and 2) said that at age 26, Nathan Cleverly (26-0 with 12 KOs; last fought on April 20, beating Robin Krasniqi UD12, above) is ahead of hall of Fame fellow Welshman Joe Calzaghe at age 26.

John David Jackson, Kovalev's trainer, spoke first on the call, before Vince got rolling with his confident assertions. He said he was happy to be in Wales, and said Kovalev's camp was solid. The ex fighter said he hopes to give the fans a good fight.

Vince Cleverly then spoke. He thanked Kovalev (21-0-1, with 19 KOs; age 30; last fought June

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14, beating Cornelius White TKO3) for taking up the challenge, which will unfold on a Frank Warren card in Cardiff, Wales. He said that Kovalev has a dream, "And Nathan is going to destroy that dream." He was just getting warmed up..

Vince Cleverly told TSS that he didn't think any of Kovalev's scalps would be good enough to beat his son. He said his son can box inside or outside, and will have a Plan A, B, C, D and F on fight night. Later, he amended that, and said he has added two plans, K and O, as well. "If anyone is going to be stopped, it's Kovalev," he stated. "I'm 100 percent convinced Nathan will kayo Kovalev," he promised. The trainer said he saw Kovalev get wobbled by Cornelius White and Gabriel Campillo, and that his boy would finish the job.

You simply have to love Vince's confidence; I'd buy two used cars from this guy. He said that 26-year-old Nathan would be between 30 and 40 percent better than he's been in previous fights, and went on to say that in 300 or so rounds of sparring between Nathan and Joe Calzaghe, there were times when it was Nathan, not Joe, that looked like the world champ. That came after Jackson said it was not proper to mention Clev and Calzaghe in the same breath.

As proof of Nathan's sturdiness, Vince said that his son sparred with cruiser Lateef Kayode at Freddie Roach's Wild Card a couple years back, as well as Brit heavyweight Dereck Chisora in the UK, and had no trouble absorbing and shrugging off their power. "They all hit him with their best shots," he said. "Nathan is a very hard man, he's never been on the canvas." Plus, "you can't knock out thin air," he said, promising that his kid will box smartly. "Nathan is the dream breaker," he stated.

His kid could use a high profile win like this one to bolster his worldwide rep, Vince said, which hasn't grown like perhaps it should, he implied, because high profile folks like Carl Froch and Bernard Hopkins have ducked bouts with Clev. After he downs Kovalev, Vince said, he'd love for his kid to secure a bout with Hopkins, who he said is his favorite fighter.

Jackson was asked what might happen if Kovalev has to go deep into a fight. He said that Sergey can box, and that won't be a problem. The trainer said Cleverly and his crew have been talking a lot and that doesn't mean much. "Cleverly has decent boxing skills," he said. "But they're going to fight an army with a handgun."

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JDJ said he has studied Cleverly, and will exploit the weaknesses. A win will result, be it by KO or by decision, he said. He said he didn't think his guy needs a KO to win.

Ex junior middle champ JDJ recalled his fight against Brit Chris Pyatt, in 1990, and he nullified the home field advantage with clever boxing in Leicestershire, he said.

He seemed confident that the same result, a W, will occur on Aug. 17, on Cleverly's home court, and on HBO.

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### **gibola says:**

Cleverly is very, very busy, he has a great chin and a huge heart. If he gets through the early rounds and doesn't let his heart rule his head he can win by decision or late stoppage. My biggest worry is that Nathan trades too early in the fight. He has to box, box, box in the early rounds, no macho stuff, then slowly take it to Kovalev. HBO has a fantastic matchup here and I hope the fight gets the attention it deserves because both guys will leave it all in the ring. If pushed for a prediction, I think Cleverly takes some bombs, wobbles and survives, and stops Kovalev late. To be honest I think I'll keep my money in my pocket on this fight - anything can happen - a truly fantastic style matchup so credit to all who made it happen.

### **brownsugar says:**

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I agree ... this fight is a dream fight for action lovers...Cleverly seems to have a limitless supply of stamina and is adept at punching from any range. He gets hit but he absorbs punches very

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well. Kovalov brings technical boxing acumen and is an aggressive and very accurate puncher...

Neither fighter has been in with anybody who possess their unique attributes...And since I don't know enough about Cleverly to gauge the limits of his chin and heart ..... I have to side with Kovalov.. I can't imagine anyone standing up to his precision an power... I hope Cleverly proves me wrong... but whomever you like **DO NOT MISS THIS FIGHT!!!**